

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of loading stacks of frozen animal products onto a ship without the use of slip sheets, the stacks of cartons being supported by 4-way pallets having an upper surface comprising a plurality of generally parallel boards, the method comprising:

providing a carrier in a loading location adjacent a ship, the carrier having an edge along one side adjacent a load area on the carrier;

providing a stack of cartons directly supported on a standard pallet adjacent the ship;

positioning the pallet and stack of cartons adjacent to the edge of the carrier with the boards forming the upper surface of the pallet extending away from the edge of the carrier;

applying a force to the stack of cartons to slide it from said pallet onto the load area of a carrier in a direction perpendicular to the edge of the carrier; and

lifting the carrier into the hold of a ship without the pallet.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

lifting the stack of cartons from the carrier using a load push lift truck;

transporting the stack of cartons to a stowage location using a load push lift truck;

and

depositing the stack of cartons in a stowage location using the load push mechanism of the load push lift truck.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of sliding the stack of cartons further comprises the step of positioning the pallet adjacent the edge of the carrier using a load push lift truck, and wherein the step of applying a force to the stack of cartons comprises using the load push mechanism of the load push lift truck to apply a force to the stack of cartons.

4. The method of claim 2 wherein the step of lifting said stack of cartons from said carrier comprises the steps of:

providing a carrier having fork channels extending under the load area of the carrier;

inserting the blades of a load push lift truck into the fork channels; and

lifting the stack of cartons from the carrier by raising the blades of the lift truck.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein the carrier includes at least two fork channels, and wherein the step of sliding said stack of cartons onto the carrier further comprises the step of sliding said stack of cartons over the fork channels.

6. The method of claim 3 wherein the step of sliding said stack of cartons onto the carrier further comprises the step of sliding said stack of cartons over a plurality of fork channels extending parallel to the direction of sliding of the stack of cartons.

7. The method of claim 2 wherein the step of depositing the stack of cartons in a stowage location further comprises the steps of:

transporting the stack of cartons to a position near the stowage location with a side shift load push lift truck;

shifting the stack of cartons laterally relative to the load push lift truck using a side shift mechanism provided on the lift truck;

moving the stack of cartons out of engagement with the blades of the load push lift truck using the load push mechanism of the lift truck.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the stack of cartons is wrapped in a plastic film prior to the commencement of the step of sliding the stack of cartons from the pallet onto the carrier.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the stack of cartons directly supported by the pallet is positioned adjacent to the carrier such that the upper surface of the pallet is at least as high as the upper edge of the carrier.

10. A carrier for depalletizing and receiving stacks of cartons of frozen animal product into the hold of a ship without the use of slip sheets, and for supporting such stacks of cartons for removal therefrom by a load push lift truck for stowage within the ship, the carrier comprising:

a base having an upper surface,

a plurality of fork channels formed in the upper surface capable of receiving the blades of a load push lift truck for removal and stowage of the stack of cartons in the hold of the ship, the base further including a loading edge adjacent to which a pallet bearing a stack of cartons of frozen animal products may be positioned and over which such stack of cartons may be slid onto the carrier from the pallet; and

a connector for connecting the base to a lifting device capable of lifting the carrier into the hold of a vessel.

11. The carrier of claim 10 further comprising a pallet stop adjacent the loading edge of the base for engaging an edge of a pallet from which stacks of cartons are to be moved onto the carrier.

12. The carrier of claim 10 wherein the height of the loading edge of the carrier is no greater than the height of pallets from which stacks of cartons may be slid onto the carrier.

13. The carrier of claim 10 wherein the pallet stop is parallel to the long axis of the fork channels, wherein at least one such fork channel has a wall remote from said pallet stop, and wherein such remote wall is angled upwardly and away from said pallet stop.

14. The carrier of claim 10 wherein the base includes at least two areas for receiving stacks of cartons and wherein said connector comprises a center stop connected to the base between said two areas.

15. The carrier of claim 14 wherein the height of said center stop is greater than the height of stacks of cartons to be loaded onto said carrier.